

The Resurrection of Christ is No Joke
FBC-DL April 1, 2018
Easter Message

Introduction:

-Easter is the first Sunday, after the first full moon, after the Vernal Equinox (On the equinoxes the Sun shines directly on the equator and [day and night is nearly equal](#))

-So now you know... and strange as it may seem, that makes when we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Savior, fall on April Fool's Day...April 1.

-But I am here to tell you that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is no joke! Hardly!

-Let's see why the resurrection of Christ is no joke.

-I want to give you 4 reasons why the resurrection is no joke:

I. The Resurrection of Christ is no joke for without it Jesus was just another man. Rom. 1:4a, Matt. 28:6

-Truly Jesus, even without the resurrection, was extraordinary. His words, and works, along with His supernatural birth, power over death, and sinless life would have made Him unique among men in all history.

-But it was His resurrection that separated Him from all other men.

-The Apostle Paul said, "*Jesus was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.*" Rom. 1:4a

-The resurrection confirms His deity... He was not just a man; He was God!

-And if Jesus rose from the grave as He said He would, we can believe His other promises too! As the angel said to the women at the empty tomb: "*He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said!*" Matt. 28:6

-If Jesus had not risen from the dead, He would simply be another man, though a great one. But because He arose, His deity is demonstrated... He is God!

II. The Resurrection of Christ is no joke for without it Christianity would be a cruel hoax with hope only in this life- I Corinthians 15:1-19; 32

-May I encourage you to read this passage of Scripture this week? In it, we have the clearest definition of the Gospel, the good news is that Jesus died for our sins and rose again according to the Scriptures and was seen by many witnesses. (Not all gospel presentations today are so clear as this one).

-Chapter 15 points out that if Christ had not risen, Christianity would be a cruel hoax.

-There would be no content to our preaching or our faith (vain=empty), the apostles who preached the resurrection as witnesses would be liars, our Christian faith would be worthless as we would still be in our sins, the believers who have died in Christ would have perished, and we, of all people should be pitied.

-Paul goes on to speak of what he had risked to carry the gospel to others and said, if there is no resurrection then we might as well "*Eat, and drink, for tomorrow we die.*" vs 32. Sadly, many have chosen to live exactly like that today.

-Stephen Hawking, the greatest intellectual mind since Albert Einstein shows us how contemporary thinking leads to this conclusion.

-Hawking said: "Before we understand science, it is natural to believe that God created the universe. But now science offers a more convincing explanation. What I meant by 'we would know the mind of God' is, we

would know everything that God would know, if there were a God, which there isn't. [I'm an atheist](#)." Hawking died recently at age 76. He said:

"*Spontaneous creation* is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist. It is not necessary to invoke God to set the universe going."

"One can't prove that God doesn't exist. But science makes God unnecessary. ... The laws of physics can explain the universe without the need for a creator."

"I believe the simplest explanation is, there is no God. No one created the universe and no one directs our fate. This leads me to a profound realization that there *probably* is no heaven and no afterlife either. We have this one life to appreciate the grand design of the universe and for that, I am extremely grateful." (Really? Spontaneous creation explains the "grand design of the universe?")

-What strikes me is the arrogance of such a man. He sounds more like an 'agnostic' (one who cannot know for sure that there is a god) than an atheist, when he said, "There *probably* is no heaven or afterlife."

-His real purpose is also clear: "*Science makes god unnecessary*." For removing God, removes accountability...live as you please.

-An agnostic at least says, "I don't know for sure," whereas an atheist says, "I have examined everything and I know everything there is to know and conclude that "there is no god." What arrogance!

-Hawking is right on one point...if there is no God we are like a computer that gets wiped clean... we die, there is no heaven or afterlife.

-*"Spontaneous creation"* explains everything around us... and created the universe and everything in it. There is no need for God, for Jesus, for the resurrection. That, my friends, is your choice that the greatest mind since Albert Einstein lays out for us... God is the cause of it all or 'unintelligent, impersonal, spontaneous creation' (chance) explains it all! And if God doesn't exist, and there is no heaven or afterlife, we might as well "*eat and drink, for tomorrow we die*."

-Did you know that the Bible talked about Stephen Hawking... well, not him specifically, but men just like him? Listen what the Bible says of him: "*The fool has said in his heart, there is no God*." Ps. 14:1, 53:1, I Cor. 1:18-25.

-The Bible says: the God who not only created all that we see, sent His Son to die for fallen mankind and rise again because God knew that man left to himself would come to the kind of foolish conclusions for the universe and afterlife that Hawking did. God loved us so much that He sent His Son to make sure we could be forgiven of our arrogance and sins, and have the certainty of heaven and afterlife with Him!

-The Bible says: *"Knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also."* II Cor. 4:14

-*"Absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord."* II C. 5:8

-Jesus *"has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who are asleep."* I Cor. 15:20

-*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope **through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith..."* I Pet. 1:3-5

-Because Christ rose from the dead His resurrection guarantees that we too shall be raised from the dead and live eternally!

-The resurrection is no joke; otherwise we believers would be most to be pitied for believing in Christ...but this life is not all there is.

III. The resurrection of Christ is no joke for without it the believer would have no power for Christian living. Heb. 4:1-16, 7:25; Eph. 1:19-20; Col. 1:18

-Because of the resurrection of Christ we have a living *"High Priest who was tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. We can draw near with confidence to the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need...for He **always lives to make intercession** for us".* Heb. 4:14-16, 7:25

-Because of the resurrection of Christ we have His **power** to live the Christian life... *"a power in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead."* Eph. 1:19-20

-Because of the resurrection of Christ we have a **living head of the church**, *"the first-born from the dead, so that He might come to have first place in everything."* Col. 1:18

-Imagine what would happen in FBC if we all had that attitude.... to give Christ first place in everything! First place in our attitude, our speech, our service, our giving, our living...in everthing!

-The resurrection of Christ gives us an intercessor, a power for living the Christian life, and a living Head over the church... that is no joke.

IV. The resurrection of Christ is no joke for without the resurrection of Christ there would be no justice for our world. Heb. 9:27, 10:31, Acts 17:30-31

-What do you do with the cruelty of humanity in our world? Will there be justice for Hitler, Stalin, Hussein? ISIS? Mass murderers? Immoral?

-We can remove this question from the obvious acts of cruelty to ask if there will be justice for rejecting Christ. The Bible says:

"Inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment." Heb. 9:27

"It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
Heb. 10:31

-Yes, the likes of Hitler, Stalin, who have the souls of millions of people on their conscience, as well as unbelievers will have an accounting.

-What does that have to do with the resurrection of Christ anyway?

-Actually, it has everything to do with it. I'll show you what I mean...In

Acts 17:30-31 the Apostle Paul is speaking in Athens, Greece, says:

*"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, **having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.**"*

-How do we know justice is really going to happen?

-He has given proof to all men by raising Christ from the dead.

-Every Easter, every celebration of the resurrection, every time we mention the resurrection of Christ, God is giving His notice... it's time, it's time to get right with God through Jesus. You are one day closer to the day of judgment already on God's calendar...the Judge is appointed and the resurrection of Christ is your proof that judgment will happen.

-This Easter Sunday God is extending to you an invitation to receive His Son... to get right with God (be forgiven of you guilt and shame) by placing your faith/trust in Jesus Christ whose resurrection is the very proof of His deity and of coming judgment.

-The resurrection of Christ is God's proof that He means business.

Won't you place your trust in Jesus who died and rose again to give you forgiveness of sin and everlasting life? Gospel...

-What better day than today... what better time than now!

Closing Prayer and Benediction:

"Now the God of peace, **who brought up from the dead** the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen" (Hebrews 13:20)

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